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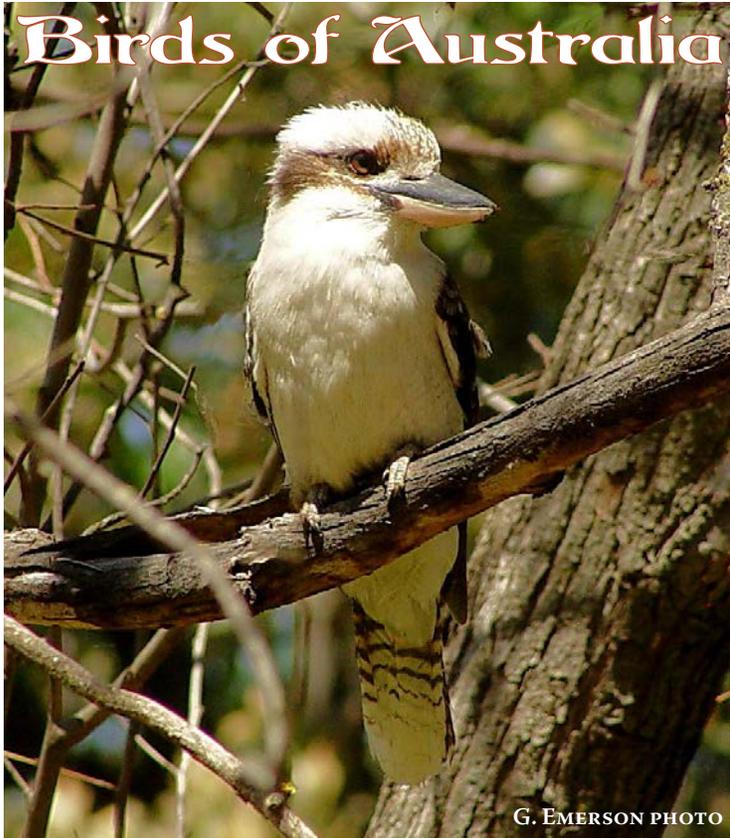
THE RAVENS

Newsletter

Southwestern New Mexico Audubon Society
is a Chapter of National Audubon Society, Inc.

May — June — July 2019 Vol. 52, No. 3

FRIDAY, MAY 3RD PROGRAM – 7:00 PM – HARLAN HALL



The Kookaburra is a popular Australian bird made famous in song. Although they are in the kingfisher family of birds, their diet consists mainly of insects, mice, snakes and other small reptiles, as well as the young of other birds.

The May 3rd monthly program of SWNM Audubon will feature a presentation on Birds of Australia by Gary Emerson. Gary is a birder, astronomer and systems engineer, who lived in Australia for several years but makes Silver City his home now. The meeting begins at 7 PM in Harlan Hall room 219, on the WNMU campus at 12th and Alabama.

Gary was very fortunate to have grown up in the Ozark Hills of northern Arkansas with an amateur naturalist grandfather who knew everything that grew, crawled, flew or swam in the woods. As soon as Gary could walk, he would accompany his grandfather and he soon started learning and enjoying nature and birds.

During a 40-plus year career, Gary worked in astronomy and space science. In astronomy he worked on a NASA contract as a Lunar Observer, making observations of the Moon. He was a solar observer for the High-Altitude Observatory, studying sunspots, and was a research associate for the University of Colorado's Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics assisting in rocket launches to study a supernova and comets. At his private observatory southwest of Boulder, Colorado, he discovered the only asteroid discovered from the state of Colorado.

While working at the University of Colorado and Ball Aerospace in Boulder, Gary worked on spacecraft that have gone to every planet in the solar system except Mercury. He worked on the focal-plane assembly for the Kepler spacecraft that found thousands of planets around other stars. He never regretted going to work a single day in his career.

The program is free and open to the public. Light refreshments follow. For additional information, send an email to swnmaudubon@gmail.com

GIVE GRANDLY! **GIVE LOCAL!**

MAY 11, 2019 **SILVER CITY, NM**

Support SWNMAS at Give Grandly

Many of you have probably heard of and participated in Give Grandly, the annual Grant County fundraising event for local nonprofits. We are extremely grateful to those who made donations to us last year and hope you will support us again this year.

We will have a table at Give Grandly on May 11 from 8:30AM – 2:30PM at 8th and Bullard Streets. That day is also the opening day of the Silver City Farmers' Market. Come down to visit with us, as well as over 50 other nonprofits, and learn about the great work going on in this community.

If you can't make it downtown that day, you can also make donations online at <https://givegrandly.civicore.com/SWNMA>



MESILLA VALLEY AUDUBON PHOTO

Statewide Auduboners gathered at Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge.

Audubon New Mexico Statewide Chapters Meet

Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge in La Joya, NM was the setting for representatives from all four Audubon chapters to meet on March 30. Jon Hayes, Executive Director of Audubon New Mexico and Desiree Loggins, network Action Manager, also attended. The main purpose was to discuss each chapter's

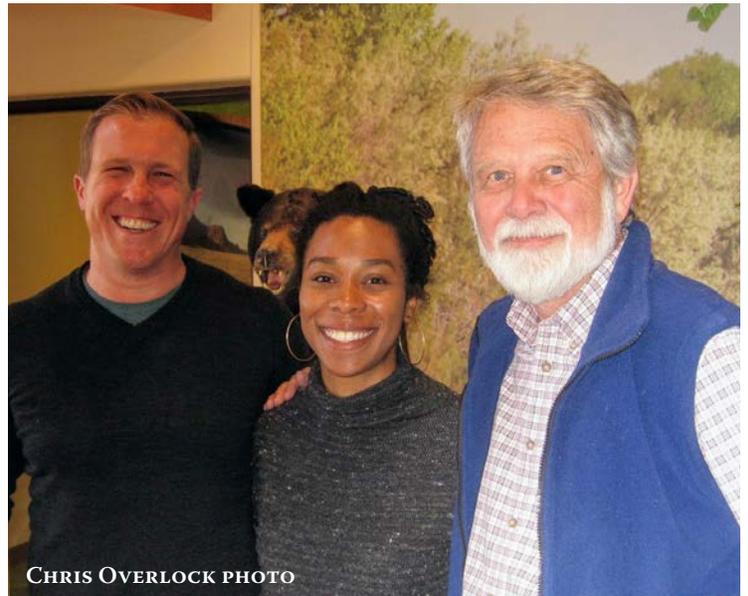
long- and short-term goals. Also on the agenda were projects the chapters would like to collaborate on and "What keeps you up at night" from each chapter. Every chapter elaborated on their accomplishments and wishes.

There was a kick-off discussion about the Audubon Council, a 501c3 organization, which hasn't been active for a few years. It was decided that the Council would benefit chapters, especially with the State Legislature and Conservation issues. There would be a representative from the State Audubon office, and each chapter would have two representatives. They will meet twice a year, either in person or on a video chat.

If anyone in SWNMAS would like to represent us as a delegate, please contact swnmaudubon@gmail.com

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CHRIS OVERLOCK PHOTO

Jon Hayes, Desiree Loggins and Terry Timme at Sevilleta gathering.

Choose Your Birding "BIG DAY"

To celebrate Global Big Day and the return of migratory birds to their breeding grounds, take part in SWNMA's Big Day! Based on the same principles as a Big Day, individuals and teams go out and count as many species of birds as they can. This will be an informal event, choosing your preferred 24-hour period anytime within May 1 and May 11. Results and interesting sightings will be shared at the potluck on May 12. The rules are simple:

- Bird only within Grant County.
- Cannot go on private property unless it is a friend's and permission is granted. For example, the ranches in the Gila are off limits as is the Glenn Ranch off of Ridge Road. You can look from the edges but do not access the properties.
- The Silver City Golf Course is off limits. With the potential of many groups or individuals asking to access the grounds to bird, it will have to be off limits. However, birding from outside the edges, looking in, is permitted.
- Send your final species #, whether you were birding as a team or individual, and any interesting/fun sightings or stories to Megan: megan.ruehmann@gmail.com
- If choosing to bird Global Big Day on May 4th, we encourage you to join the thousands of birders submitting their sightings on eBird: <https://ebird.org/news/global-big-day-4-may-2019>

Hummingbird Festival



Glenn Bartley/Vireo

Save
the Date:
July 27–28
**Mimbres
Cultural
Center**

NOTE: **SUMMER CHANGES**



We take a break for the summer months. The May 3rd program is the last one for the season. Our monthly programs will resume in October.

September 6th will be our Potluck Annual meeting, with election of officers, at the Little Walnut Pavilion. Birds and Brews continues over the summer on the fourth Thursday. If you are not on the email list contact us at swnmaudubon@gmail.com



Audubon & Gila Native Plant Society Joint Picnic Sunday, May 12

This fourth annual joint picnic, co-hosted with the Gila Native Plant Society, will be held on Sunday, May 12th in the covered pavilion at Little Walnut, by the Gomez Peak trail head.

You are welcome to show up with your pot-luck dish, at 11AM and we'll eat at 12 noon. Audubon will provide hot-dogs and brats, buns and condiments. Gila NPS will provide drinks.

Please bring a dish to share, and your plates, cups, and eating utensils. We'll also hear the results of Audubon's "Big Day" birding activity.

Report of the Silver City 2018 Christmas Bird Count

Beginning on Christmas Day in 1900, Frank Chapman and others organized a Christmas Bird Census to count birds during the Christmas Season instead of the popular pastime of wantonly hunting birds. Thus, with a beginning of 25 counts in 1900, this past Christmas Season, from December 14 through January 5, the National Audubon Society recorded 2,458 counts involving tens of thousands of volunteers. The Southwestern New Mexico Audubon Society was one of these counts.

On 22 December 2019, 51 participants reported 89 species comprising 4405 individuals. The 51 participants included 31 surveying on well-established routes within the count circle and the remainder counting at feeding stations.

In order to make better conclusions on long-term changes in bird populations, the National Audubon Society has established rules for the various Christmas Bird Counts. Centered on a 7.5-mile radius count circle (*ca.* 177 square miles of area), each count circle remains constant from year to year. For our area, the center of the circle is on the Silver City Golf Course. The goal of the CBC is to count every individual within the circle in a 24-hour period. Owing to the size of the circle and the inaccessibility of some portions, it is not possible to do this, therefore, the results are only a sample of what the true results would be. In order to improve accuracy and comparability from year to year, the circle boundary, and the 24-hour count time must be adhered to.

In addition to the many expected species, a few unusual species detected included Rufous Hummingbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Cassin's Kingbird and a Pacific/Winter Wren.

A special thanks to all the participants, the organizers of the after count get-together, and especially Jackie Blurton for her skills in establishing all the routes and assigning them to willing individuals.
by Roland Shook



How many birds can a world of birders find in one day? You can help answer that question on May 4, 2019:

You don't have to commit to birding for 24 hours—an hour or even 10 minutes of watching birds makes you part of the team. Visit your favorite spot or search out someplace new; enjoy a solo walk or get some friends to join in the Global Big Day fun.

Last year's Global Big Day featured more than 30,000 people across 171 countries, collectively reporting 7,026 species of birds—about two-thirds of the world's bird species in a single day! This May, you can be a part of the fun. All you have to do is spend a few minutes birding, and tell eBird what you find.

Last year's Global Big Day set a new record, with 7,025 species reported in one day. On 4 May, we hope you'll be a part of birding's next world record. And no matter what you do, have fun, enjoy the birds you find, and share your sightings on eBird. Because in our world, every bird counts. ebird.org/globalbigday

See "Choose Your Local Big Day" on previous page.

Aug. 7-11 — Southeast Arizona BIRDING FESTIVAL

Tucson Audubon Society's 9th annual Southeast Arizona Birding Festival, presented by Carl Zeiss Sports Optics, is the region's premier birding experience. Bird and wildlife diversity peaks every late summer when the monsoon rains bring the desert and surrounding Sky Island mountains and canyons to life. The Southeast Arizona Birding Festival is a great introduction to this "Second Spring"—you'll go out on professionally-led half and full day field trips to see the highest diversity of hummingbirds in the U.S., Elegant Trogon, Montezuma Quail, Red-faced Warbler, and so many more AZ specialties. Visitors come from across the country to see over 200 species of birds (230 species seen in 2018!).



Southeast AZ is one of the top birdwatching destinations in the country with many species found here and nowhere else in the U.S. The Festival features expert-led field trips to many of the region's best sites, such as Madera Canyon, Mt. Lemmon, California Gulch, and the Chiricahua mountains.

In addition to amazing birding trips and guest presentations, photography workshops and field events have been expanded.

Possessive (PATRONYMIC) Bird Names

There is a movement afoot to abandon the fairly common possessives in English bird names. Indeed, the removal of the possessive apostrophe and "s" from patronymic bird names—mainly concerning the names of people—would result in new names such as *Wilson Snipe*, *Barrow Goldeneye*, *Swainson Thrush*, *Audubon Oriole*, and *Brewer Blackbird*.

The case was made last fall to the Classification Committee for the American Ornithological Society (AOS) which oversees such things. See the arguments presented by Ted Floyd here: <http://checklist.aou.org/assets/proposals/PDF/2019-A.pdf>

Needless to say, this is not just about birds. The apostrophe—with or without the accompanying "s"—is increasingly falling into disuse in the current age of text-speak, signage, and character-counting. So choose a side, because this battle will surely continue!

Birding Community E-bulletin



Nestboxes Add Pizazz And Benefit Birds

If you are a suburban homeowner with a modest backyard, or a landowner with substantial habitat or farmland, it's the time of year to review your nest-box situation, time to make sure nest boxes are cleaned

out and in good repair, and time to consider whether it's appropriate to locate more nest boxes to your property.

Placing bird houses on your property adds pizazz to the landscape of your surroundings, with the added benefit of attracting cavity-nesting songbirds to your property including bluebirds, chickadees, titmice, wrens, tree swallows, Purple Martins, and more. (Depending on the location, habitat, and latitude of your property, other non-songbird species—e.g., screech-owls and Wood Ducks—might have already begun.)

It's also comforting to know that by providing such artificial cavities you are really lending a helping hand to cavity nesting birds.

As a final reminder, especially if you are adding another box or two to your backyard habitat, now is the ideal time to start building—or shopping—for any new additions. But be aware that habitat placement, height, and, especially precise dimensions for the nest boxes are essential requirements. For excellent resource information, refer to the NestWatch details available from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at: <https://nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses>

Also, you can check out the Audubon *Birdhouse Book* SWNM Audubon has donated to area public libraries in Bayard, Cliff/Gila, Deming and Silver City.

Focusing on birds and landscapes, experts will be on hand to make you a better photographer, no matter your skill level!

The Festival also has a full slate of free and paid workshops and activities at the family-friendly weekend-long Nature Expo. Attendees can learn about birds and other wildlife, enjoy casual, morning bird walks around the venue, view live birds and animals up close, and extensive vendor fair.

Register starting March 15 at tucsonaudubon.org/festival